

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 140596
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ONY-00 /011 R

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P 022329Z JUN 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

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STADIS/////////////////////////////////
FOR AMBASSADOR FROM DICK MOOSE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, SF

SUBJECT: PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS MEDICAL TREATMENT

1. SAM BROWN CALLED ME THIS AFTERNOON IN CONNECTION WITH THE CURRENT FLAP ABOUT PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS' TRAVEL TO SOUTH AFRICA. APPARENTLY PC WASHINGTON HAS INSTRUCTED THAT ALL PRESS INQUIRIES ON THIS MATTER SHOULD BE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON. THIS AFTERNOON THE AP IN JOHANNESBURG CALLED WASHINGTON AND SAID, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THAT THEY HAD BEEN TOLD WASHINGTON HAD PUT A QUOTE GAG ORDER CLOSE QUOTE ON FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE MATTER FROM THE FIELD.

2. SAM WAS INCLINED TO THINK THAT SOMEONE IN THE EMBASSY
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PAGE 02 STATE 140596

WHO DISAGREED WITH THE PEACE CORPS POLICIES MUST HAVE TOLD THE AP THIS. I POINTED OUT TO SAM THAT THIS WAS NOT A FAIR ASSUMPTION ON HIS PART. THAT THERE IS EVERY BIT AS MUCH LIKELIHOOD THAT SOME OF HIS OWN DISSIDENT VOLUNTEERS WERE BEHIND THE STORY OF A "GAG ORDER." OR, I TOLD HIM, AP JOHANNESBURG MAY SIMPLY HAVE CHOSEN TO CHARACTERIZE THE REFERRAL TO WASHINGTON IN AN INFLAMMATORY MANNER.

SAM ACKNOWLEDG THAT MY THEORIES WERE AT LEAST AS VALID
AS HIS.

3. I THOUGHT YOU SHOULD KNOW OF THIS EXCHANGE AND I
AM SURE YOU WILL SATISFY YOURSELF THAT NO ONE IN THE
MISSION -- AT LEAST OFFICIALLY OR INsofar AS YOU HAVE
ANY CONTROL OVER THEM -- IS TRYING TO UNDERMINE THE
POSITION -- RIGHT OR WRONG -- THAT SAM IS TAKING. I
HAVE TOLD HIM MY OWN VIEW THAT I THINK TRAVEL TO SOUTH
AFRICA SHOULD BE A MATTER OF INDIVIDUAL CHOICE FOR THE
VOLUNTEERS. IN A SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION SAM TOLD ME HIS
GREATEST CONCERN IS REALLY THOSE PCVS IN SWAZILAND WHO
SPEND THEIR WEEKENDS ON SOUTH AFRICAN BEACHES. I TOLD
HIM I THOUGHT HE HAD A SELECTION AND ATTITUDINAL PROBLEM
WHICH DIRECTIVES WERE UNLIKELY TO SOLVE.

4. IF EITHER OF YOU HAS ANY THOUGHTS ON THIS, SEND
THEM TO ME VIA THIS SAME CHANNEL BECAUSE THE SECRETARY
HAS EXPRESSED TO ME AN INTEREST IN THE MATTER. REGARDS.

CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, ALLEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE140596
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: PCM
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780232-0296
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197806100/aaaadikm.tel
Line Count: 83
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 8a1b077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS, ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2137568
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS MEDICAL TREATMENT
TAGS: SOPN, EAID, SOCI, SF, XJ, PC
To: CAPE TOWN
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/8a1b077c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014